THE USE OF FILMS IN TEACHING VALUES AND ATTITUDES

Submitted by

MARY M[illegible]NTLIAN GEARY

THE USE OF FILMS IN TEACHING VALUES AND ATTITUDES

SERVICE PAPER

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Education

MARY M. HINTLIAN GEARY
REGIS COLLEGE, A.B., 1946

First Reader:- William H. Cartwright, Assistant Professor of Education

Second Reader:- Krasker, Abraham, Assistant Professor of Motion Pictures and Visual Aids.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE USE OF FILMS IN TEACHING VALUES AND ATTITUDES

The development of new values and the shaping of new attitudes toward other people is the primary concern of every true educator. However, the question of procedure is always of paramount importance, and the alert teacher is continually searching for more effective means of inculcating right attitudes, creating better understandings, and of helping the child to organize and to assimilate the ideas presented to him. To the teacher of Social Studies who has an abiding faith in education, and who sees it as a vital force in the eternal struggle for human freedom, the classroom motion picture must truly appear as an eloquent and dramatic aid to the teaching of better group relationships.

The difficulty of comprehending divergent culture patterns is the cause of most of the prejudice and antagonism that exist among people. There is no doubt that the tensions existing among the various racial and religious groups in our country cause one of the gravest dangers to our American democratic way of life. To relieve these tensions we have need for a greater knowledge of other people,

other ways of living, other ways of thinking.

Before we can live and work and build a future with other people, we must know their problems, their aspirations, their fears, and their needs. Very often this knowledge is brought to us too late in life for us to receive it and to profit by it. By adult life many of our strongest emotional attitudes toward life and our fellow-Americans have been formed. Moreover, these attitudes are so thoroughly and completely a part of us that we are often unconscious of them and therefore incapable of passing judgment upon them. Once a prejudice is formed within a personality, it is generally there to stay. Psychologists tell us that children are born without prejudices, but gradually absorb the emotional tone of their parents and of their environments. Certainly it is natural that children should accept the attitudes and values of their elders as unconsciously as they accept their food, shelter, and care.

Anyone who has read the current best seller, "The Proper Bostonians", by Cleveland Amory must be rather acutely aware of this fact. In a most trenchant manner Mr. Amory has taken a small group of Boston "Brahmins" and shown them to be following determined traditional group patterns of living with unquestioning acceptance. Mr. Amory brings home to us the bitter truth that education, culture,

money, breeding, travel -- that all these supposedly broadening influences will not change biases and prejudices that have already become the woof and the warp of adult personality. We must reach our children while the tapestries of their lives are on the loom in the process of being woven, not after the patterns have been designed, drawn, and set permanently in fixed and enduring dyes.

There is one lesson in pedagogy that we can learn from totalitarian psychologists: indoctrinate the young! With their "Youth Movements", the totalitarians plant the seed while the garden of the mind is composed of fresh soil, before they have to tear up the growths already rooted there. Adult life, then, is too late to begin to form correct habits of mind. Such habits must be inculcated in the young American before he has had opportunity to be corrupted by the prejudices, fallacies, and illusions that give rise to intolerance, injustice, and social inequality. Now, what more effective method of indoctrination could a teacher find than the moving picture? Educators are beginning to recognize this fact. Charles Hoban, from his long experience with school films and later with the Army Pictorial Service, has commented upon educational films:

> "No single communicative medium in the world's history has so universally influenced human behavior

as has the motion picture. Through the ages religion has had its great preachers, its beautiful cathedrals, its dramatizations, its stained glass windows, its ceremonies, and its dogmas. But there the influence on emotions and other patterns of behavior has been a combination of experiential media. Today, patterns of children's play, patterns of dress, patterns of attitudes, patterns of speech, patterns of morality, patterns of life conduct are all influenced to some extent by the motion picture. So influential, in fact, is the motion picture in shaping the habits of thinking and acting of the masses of people that in countries ruled by dictators, the motion picture is strictly regulated and controlled by the state. . . . .

"Were the potentialities found in the theatrical motion picture turned into positive social directions, and were such socially directed motion pictures used in the schools as an integral tool of instruction, the effectiveness of school instruction could be measurably improved." (1)

In the "Adult Educational Journal", Thomas Barensfeld, another modern educator, comments on the effectiveness of the motion picture as a teaching aid. He says:

"A film is not a substitute, but a tool for teaching. It cannot take the place of a book or a lecture, but it can, as group discussion can, aid greatly towards the clarification of a subject". (2)

(1) Visualizing The Curriculum, by Charles F. Hoban and others. The Dryden Press, Inc., New York, N.Y. 1937 pp.93-94

(2) Adult Educational Journal, January 1949 issue

Although the moving picture is a perfect medium for forceful, dramatic presentation of material, it is, indeed, astonishing how few teachers recognize the power of the film to foster sympathetic attitudes in the young, to uproot prejudices, and to present pictorially actual flesh and blood people, with cultural patterns different from our own, living together democratically. By emotionalizing personalities, the moving picture indoctrinates with a vividness, a suddenness, a completeness that is not realized by any other classroom procedure.

Naturally, as teachers, we must seek for ways and means of teaching that will most readily create a response within the child. Now a child lives for the inward sensation. Longings, aspirations, wonders, dreams permeate not only his brain but his whole sensuous being. Feeling can be so spontaneous, so penetrating, that it can unify his whole consciousness and crowd it into a single shining moment. So a patriot, a humanitarian, a disciple of godliness can be born, molded in the white heat of an intense feeling.

It has always been the special function of the drama to create this spiritual catharsis. The early Christian Fathers realized this and gave the people the Mystery, Miracle, and Morality Plays to

imbue them with the principles of Christianity. We, as modern educators, should recognize the effectiveness of the drama as a teaching aid, too. In our own day and age the most significant recognition of the value of teaching with films has been made by the training divisions of our Armed Forces. Their training problem at the outset of the war was stupendous. Millions of civilians were to learn how to become efficient fighting men in the shortest possible time. The lessons had to be learned quickly and the penalty for inadequate instruction was to increase the natural hazards of war. Men's lives depended upon quick and efficient training. In meeting this emergency, the training divisions of the Armed Forces utilized instructional films to a much greater extent than any extensive program of public education had attempted heretofore.

In the excellent article entitled "Intergroup Relations in Teaching Materials", prepared and published by the National Conference of Christians and Jews, (1) there is an interesting analysis of the teaching aids commonly used in the public schools of the United States. One of the conclusions arrived at by the commission appointed

(1) Summary Statement, January 20, 1947. Commission on Educational Organizations. National Conference of Christians and Jews, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

to study the situation is that American education fails "to come to grips with issues especially significant for young citizens today". The commission "expresses the hope that, in the immediate future, schools will deal more positively and constructively with the ethical, psychological, and sociological problems that are causing group tensions".

The following deductions quoted from the report of this commission show the urgent need for a more effective means of creating an understanding of the various groups that go to make up the "melting pot" that is America:

> "Treatment of the Jews: Most of the material about Jews in texts and courses of study is about the ancient Jews: for example, three-fourths of the space allotted to Jews in world history texts deal with events before 79 A.D. Pupils are left with the assumption that Judaism and Jewish culture have changed little since that time. Mentions of Jews after that date are most commonly in connection with persecutions; there is little about the constructive contributions of the group or about their ordinary harmonious relations with other groups. Many of the accounts of the Crucifixion, as found in world histories, are too generalized to be fully accurate, and afford some basis for the development of prejudice among pupils. There are many inaccuracies in the description of Jews as a 'race'; there is little recognition of religious, economic, and cultural variations among Jews; there is little to offset the stereotypes of Jews which abound in contemporary social thinking.
>
> "Treatment of the Negroes: While recently prepared texts and curricula tend to develop more attention to

> Negroes as an American group, the typical texts and teaching guides tend to ignore this group and its position in contemporary society. A very large proportion of the references to Negroes put before pupils treat Negroes as slaves or as child-like freed men. Very little data about Negroes since 1876 are to be found in the history texts. The plantation 'mammy' and Uncle Remus stereotypes tend to be perpetuated both in social science and literary materials. Textbooks in all fields, on occasion, even in biology, present hazy and confused ideas about race. Scientific data about race are conspicuous by their absence. The illustrative materials of most texts deal even less adequately and sensitively with Negroes than do the printed words."

Certainly the classroom film can do more to destroy such generalization and stereotypes as the commission mentions than any other teaching aid available. Teachers should use it to imbue their pupils with new emotional experiences necessary for better group relationships within our country. The drama presents, not types, but actual people in their pursuit of security, success, and happiness -- their environments, their joys and sorrows, their tribulations, dreams, fantasies, aspirations. These are the active forces that make people what they are -- individuals. As the story of the drama unfolds, the child gradually comes to realize that no one Jew, nor Christian is symbolic of all the people in his group in toto. Each group possesses a host of individuals and, therefore, a stereotyped picture is a false picture. The child is made aware

of the error of vertical, symbolic concepts like Anglo-Saxon culture or Nordic supremacy, and sees the necessity for horizontal symbols which will result in a broader understanding of human drives revealing themselves in infinite diversity.

Before going on to a detailed study of films available for use in Social Studies, it would be wise to pause a moment here to set forth and draw together what should be our specific objectives in the teaching of better group relations. Just what, as teachers of Social Studies, must we impress upon our students in order to achieve more accurate patterns of thought which will result in a more altruistic, democratic, and harmonious way of life?

Naturally, the Social Studies teacher intends no splitting-off of any portions of the domain laid down for himto teach as ends in themselves. His aim is, rather, to vitalize and make more effectual the ideas taught in Social Studies through the quickening of a new awareness within the student's mind to the dangers ofisolationism within his own group, dissociated from a knowledge of other groups.

First, it is important that we teach our pupils that no man is an island. We are all important parts of our whole, unified, democratic, living America. No matter his color, his race, nor his creed, every person must have those rights that give dignity, stature, value, meaning, and individual worth. Because of the

sympathy existing in our human nature, even while possessing these things ourselves, we cannot be content until all men have them throughout the length and breadth of America.

Moreover, as American teachers, we hold certain social tenets, and we feel it our duty to make the following truths evident to our pupils: no race has a monopoly on intelligence; great civilizations have developed in many kinds of racial, religious, and ethnic groups; it is wrong to form stereotypes of any people or group and to build generalizations from particular instances; qualities and characteristics do not reside in groups but in persons; scapegoating, classlines, discriminations, labels, name-calling, hatreds, antagonisms are due to prejudices that have no logical nor rational basis for existing.

Schoolroom "movies" can show that such qualities as love of family and home, courage, devotion, integrity, faith, and trust are universal. We all feel akin to people who think and feel and suffer and rejoice as we do. By showing our children in the classroom through motion pictures these personality traits actually in operation as people live their daily lives, a sense of kinship and mutual understanding will be developed. Such new attitudes, accompanied by the pictorial and emotional setting of the drama,

will create new images and will etch them so deeply upon our children's minds that no false ideologies in later life will ever efface or blur the outlines.

We might call drama used for indoctrination "psychodrama". The moving pictures or psychodrama prepared for use of Social Studies classes seem, themselves, to fall into the following classifications or units:

A. Those dealing with race, color, and creed, usually resulting through the inbreeding of a people for many centuries

B. Those dealing with different socio-economic levels

C. Those setting forth geographical and environmental differences

D. Those attempting to teach patterns of living that promote the American democratic way of life.
Those setting forth the values and attitudes that find expression in right behavior and wholesome action

E. Those giving, through historical scenes and patriotic biographies, a more penetrating view into the past, and a greater realization of the

permanence of our democratic tradition and our free heritage

F. Those fostering in the pupil an awareness of himself as an individual with the right of free thought and free choice -- an individual upon whom rests the responsibility and the privilege of active participation in the free, democratic life of America

In Classification A belong all films that present the concept of cultural pluralism and of diversity within unity as the desired pattern of Americanism. In this first group we shall put all films reviewed that teach the democratic principle of the brotherhood of man, that seek to fight intolerance and encourage cooperation, that foster respect for individual worth and dignity. Included here will be those films that insist that the democratic way of life recognizes individual differences, and those also that bring out the fact that, although no two people are alike, each is to be respected for what he is. Here belong those films that show the false idea of racial stereotypes, and also those that make it plain that persons are neither specimens, nor statistics, nor demonstrations -- neither exaggerations nor caricatures. In this group

will be the films that demonstrate the truth that various immigrant groups are not "hordes" nor "swarms" nor "problems", that there are no "in-group" and "out-group" distinctions.

One American educator has a word which may be quoted here as a summary of the important objectives of films under this first classification:

> "Education should be directed toward the achievement of those attitudes, beliefs, and purposes which will strengthen youth's devotion to the ideal of equal rights for all, regardless of race, religion, or cultural background. The broadening of the allegiances and sympathies of youth to include the people of all nations has become a fundamental necessity in a day when international cooperation and goodwill are the only alternatives to future destructive wars which can destroy all we know of civilization." (1)

In Classification B, belong films dealing with different socio-economic levels. The people we best understand, naturally, are those in our own socio-economic level. For example, propertied groups have a sense of security inbred within them which makes it difficult for them to understand the fears and frustrations of insecurity. "Monied people" talk about "the poor", "the under-privileged", and "relief recipients" as if such groups were composed of stereotypes. Private school children feel superior to public school children.

(1) Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, February 1946

The films in this second classification would personalize the lives of the people within their stories, making them no longer stereotypes but contemporary people, living their lives today at the very time that the students themselves live their lives.

Under the spell of the drama, young people can live vicariously through the hopes and fears of their contemporaries, whether they belong to their particular socio-economic level or not. They can see them in the midst of their family life; they can see their interchange between friends. So groups will vanish, and flesh and blood people will take the place of the erroneous images that hate, bigotry, and misunderstanding have built up through the ages. Current types like "Irish cops", "Jewish pawn-brokers", "Italian organ-grinders", "Mexican half-breeds", "Chinese laundrymen", and similar generalizations are vicious symbols that children learn from the street or from the adult world around them.

The plot of the films in this group, plus the emotional experiences of the characters involved in the stories, will imprint human values and attributes with intense vividness upon the students. They will see people as real persons and not as peculiar deviates from their own patterns of living. The impact of an idea communicated dramatically is unestimable in its force.

In Classification C, we might vary our method of procedure by using a chart. We shall include here films showing groups having different patterns of living than ours because of geographical or environmental differences. Children should be made to feel that they can promote national unity by learning about people in different parts of our country. No longer will they think of "poor whites", "hill-billies", "Georgia crackers", "down-Easters", "creoles", "Kentucky mountaineers" as groups removed from themselves. Here belong those films giving a kaleidoscopic presentation of American life:

1. Different customs or mode of living

    a. Home life
    b. Work
    c. Recreation
    d. Foods
    e. Clothes
    f. Shelter
    g. Language

2. Different beliefs

    a. Rituals
    b. Ceremonies
    c. Myths
    d. Superstitions

3. Different values

    a. Home
    b. Happiness
    c. Success
    d. Security
    e. Ideals
    f. Desires
    g. Ambitions

Films in Classification D should make clear the desired behavior or "values" that Americans should possess as these "values" are the basis for "attitudes". For illustration, the values we Americans have insisted upon our youth learning are cheerfulness, sportsmanship, cleanliness, personal appearance, the need for a command of language to achieve successful communication, the need for a government that preserves and enriches our personal freedom. These things are abstractions but, through the classroom film, they become concrete to adolescence. Pearl Buck in a recent novel makes one of her characters, an aristocratic Chinese matron say, "I feel the need of more knowledge of some sort. What sort I do not know myself". (1) The Christian priest replies, "Perhaps it is not so much knowledge as more understanding of that which you already know." It is just this clarification that the moving picture gives to the young student -- "more understanding" of that he has known but never fully comprehended.

Educators today say that education should be concerned with the emotions as well as with the intellect. Knowing this, we should choose under Classification E those films that make historical

(1) Pavilion of Women, by Pearl S. Buck The John Day Co. 1946

scenes and patriotic biographies a thrilling emotional experience -- filled with power and drama and fervor.

> "The problem of the teacher is to make of her history a living thing. Living history is what the time requires. Too long have our boys and girls been bored to death by the old-fashioned textbook method -- if one can ever affix the term "method" to this way of imparting history.
>
> "History teachers must keep abreast of the wealth of illustrative material that is available to make their work possess color and interest. Of all the classroom tools that may be used for the vitalization of history, pictures hold a pre-eminent place. What pictures to use and how to use them are often serious problems -- problems that require constant and continuous experimentation. But the experimentation pays big dividends as results manifest themselves in increased interest in history, and increased receptivity on the part of the high school boys and girls." (1)

Films selected under Classification E must show the permanence of our American heritages and traditions. They must show, also, the relevance of these traditions to a constantly changing modern world. Too often young people fail to see any conceivable relation between the past and their own age. We must show them that our democratic heritage is always modern. A traditional past does not mean one that supports a status quo. Such a perpetuation of tradition would never help us to achieve a new world. No, we in America have a dynamic past -- one intelligible in terms of a

(1) Audio-Visual Materials in the High School, by Frances Norene Ahl. The Christopher Publishing House, Boston, Mass. 1946 pp. 75-76

modern changing world. If we are conscious of one truth today, it is that our world is changing quite obviously and with startling suddenness and profound significance.

How can we make all this understandable to the young mind? Through the classroom moving picture show our young Americans that the democratic ideals of Thomas Jefferson are as powerful in our age, where democracy is fighting totalitarianism and collectivism, as they were in 1776, when democracy was fighting hereditary rule and aristocratic control. Through the emotional impact of the drama, force home to our pupils the idea that Lincoln's Gettysburg Address is still a living challenge to them to preserve their government of the people, by the people, for the people. Make it a thrilling revelation to them that the Ten Commandments brought down by Moses from Mount Sinai are as true a moral law today as they were ten thousand years ago: for after centuries of experience with the good and evil inherent in human nature, these laws still stand as absolute laws of right moral conduct.

In this group, then, belong films striving to show the permanence of what is true and ideal. As teachers of Social Studies, we must strive especially hard to find films belonging under this classification, films that will show our children those great abiding principles, beliefs, ideals, and traditions that have sunk

below the surface but that still direct the current of our American life. Dr. Edgar Dale writing on "The Power of the Film" says, in part:

> "The motion picture can recreate. It can make the past live for the great masses of people who would otherwise find it misty, musty, stale, and dusty.....The motion picture can build attitudes. Its power to create a mood, to form an outlook, to portray emotion can be used to build indelible impressions, impressions which will become a part of the emotional life of the individual." (1)

In our last classification, we shall include all those films that will help our pupils to understand one of the most significant elements in a democracy, namely, the awareness of man himself as an individual. In dramas selected under this group they will see man as a being striving for wholeness and completeness, aspiring always for growth and fulfillment.

One of the best contributions to modern thought that psychoanalysis has made is the distressing fact of man's uncertainty -- uncertainty about himself, his neighbors, his place in society. Worst of all is man's uncertainty about his own personal ability to cope with this new Atomic Age that is upon us, and his inability to understand the conflicting ideologies confusing modern thought. We must make our future American citizen aware of his own worth as an

(1) The Power of the Film, by Edgar Dale. The News Letter, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. October 1944

individual. We must make him realize that he does not exist as a function, nor does he exist as the pawn of a state, nor as the tool of a dictator. He has value, dignity, and worth in his own selfhood.

There is altogether too much cynicism, pessimism, and disparagement among our commentators upon American life. Certainly, without danger of becoming Jingoists, we can refuse to see our age as a whirlpool with no direction nor current. Our young people hear stories of political corruption, civic deterioration, lack of consistent national policies, political machines, party politics, and pressure groups, until their faith in America is well-nigh destroyed. Everywhere they hear the grown-ups around them raising harsh voices of protest about the imminence of war, over-taxation, dollar diplomacy, the superficiality and materialism of present-day life, and so on ad infinitum. Too many of the movies seen by the adolescent give him a deplorable picture of contemporary life. Therefore, since the neighborhood movies fail to interpret to the child the abiding aspects of Americanism, the classroom film must step in to do this service for him because "learning in school must be continuous with the rest of life and not a thing apart. Learning in school, like learning outside of school, is most efficient when the child is interested and when he is personally involved in the work." (1)

(1) New Methods vs. Old in American Education, An Analysis and Summary of Recent Comparative Studies, by the Informal Committee Appointed by the Progressive Education Association to report on Evaluation of Newer Practices in Education, pp.53

A short time ago Mr. Allen, co-author of "Washington Merry-Go-Round", wrote a book showing our great cities to be, in his own words, "still corrupt and still content". Mr. Allen selected seventeen leading cities, and in each, he said, he chose a leading writer or analyst of public affairs, an unbiased man who knew the city, to tell the bare truth -- "all of it and nothing but" -- about the graft and corruption, no matter what heads must roll. Here is his summary: "There was scarcely a city in Nazi Germany or Jingoist Japan that was not managed more efficiently and intelligently than comparable communities in the United States." (1) What a shocking thing for children to hear discussed by their elders! Let us suppose that a modern novel like Lester Cohen's "Coming Home" should be discussed in the presence of young teen-age Americans. What cynicism and disgust it would create in hearts that should burn and glow with love and pride of country!

Young people hear words and phrases bandied about over the radio, in the daily newspapers, by their teachers, at their family dinner tables, for which they have no adequate understanding. Such terms as "liberalism", "radicalism", "collectivism", "totalitarianism", "Fascism", "Communism", "Isolationism", and all the other "isms" and "ologies" tossed about so glibly not only confuse and bewilder them, but tend to make them feel inferior and inadequate. At an

(1) Our Fair City by Robert Sharon Allen The Vanguard Press, New York, N.Y. 1947

early age they acquire a deeply rooted fear of this gigantic global enigma which grown-ups tell them they must learn to decipher.

Since the beginning of this study, the phrase "the American way of life" has been used many times. Perhaps it would be well to pause here and explain what this expression means. The American way of life is the sum total of each individual American's duties to his God, to his American democratic government, and to his fellow Americans. The American way of life is characterized by the positive and insistent demand for sympathy, understanding, and tolerance. Its purpose is that freedom and equality should ever increase among all men. It affirms itself in each and every individual American by an attitude of mind, heart, and soul that externalizes itself greatheartedly and ardently in cooperative, harmonious, and democratic living. Certainly such a conception would recognize the relations which attach one to another all the various and different citizens of our country, and which set up between us all a multiple of inter-crossing series of reciprocal dependence so numberless that each one of us is affected by all the others living in our country with us. As a drop of water in a wave is carried along by the entire mass, so every American, in his ascent toward the free life, should be lifted up by all the others. So our solidarity is the triumph of our unity.

Naturally, the question arises as to the standards by which we judge an educational film. Is it as good as the material it presents?

Is it as effective as the provocative questions it asks and the challenge it offers? Is it as effectual as the emotional reaction it evokes?

In judging a Social Studies classroom film, we should ask, first, can the pupil make a practical application of the theme presented to his own life? Second, does he experience the quickening of a new and exciting awareness within his mind to the issues involved? Third, are the common fallacies and short circuits of the human mind that have wrought such pain, injustice, and intolerance through the ages made apparent to him in an emphatic and decisive manner? Fourth, does it arouse in the young heart the intense desire to contribute its share in the development of a new world in which all men are bound together by bonds of mutual trust, goodwill, and sympathetic understanding? If it does these things, then the moving picture is worthwhile, and can justify its place in the education of young America.

LIST OF FILMS EVALUATED

AMERICANS ALL

BENGI

CHINA'S GIFTS TO THE WEST

DANIEL BOONE

DEMOCRACY

DON'T BE A SUCKER

GIVE ME LIBERTY

IT HAPPENED IN SPRINGFIELD

JOHN DOE: CITIZEN

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

LAFAYETTE

OF THESE OUR PEOPLE

OUR BILL OF RIGHTS

OUR SHRINKING WORLD

SONG OF A NATION

THE GREATER VICTORY

THE HOUSE I LIVE IN

THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY

THE PERFECT TRIBUTE

THE WORLD WE WANT TO LIVE IN

WE THE PEOPLE

AMERICANS ALL

Subject: Color

Rating: Poor

Discussion: The racial problem in our South is presented and, also, what the South is doing to adjust the tension existing there. The "Springfield Plan" is discussed, and a favorable attitude toward it evoked.

My criticism of this film would be that the Negroes are presented too often as unskilled laborers on the levees, in the cotton fields, on the plantations, Frequently, too, they are pictured as lovable, care-free, overgrown children who become, as it were, "the white man's burden". For the purpose of showing the Negro as capable of taking his place beside the white man as an intelligent, rational citizen, I think this film has the wrong approach to the problem.

Time: Eighteen minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: March of Time

Age Group: High School seniors

BENGI

Subjedt: Racial tolerance

Rating: Excellent:

Discussion: This story shows us a normal, happy, friendly Negro boy -- the only Negro in his small-town school. We see, too, the home of Bengi's grandparents, in which warmth and love create a happy family life for him. At school Bengi was accepted by his schoolmates and respected by them for his sterling qualities. Now comes the shock, and the emotional impact is strong, indeed. On the night of the Senior dance, the color line is drawn against Bengi. His schoolmates, who for four years had accepted him as one of themselves, now thrust him coldly outside their white group.

Here we have a startling realization of one of the most serious problems of our time. Why do men draw race distinctions and set group against group? These questions the young American will feel he must answer for himself after witnessing forceful films like "Bengi".

Time: Eighteen minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: Young America Films

Age Group: Junior and Senior High School

CHINA'S GIFTS TO THE WEST

Subject: Understanding of other races

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: A Chinese boy proudly points out to an American friend all that China has contributed to the world. He tells of her silk industries, of her discovery of gunpowder, of the lamps, vases, carvings that she produces. She breeds Pekinese dogs. She sends us tea, China dishes, dainty porcelain, and a host of other things to make life more livable and more beautiful. The pupil sees China in a new light, realizing the vast scope of her gifts to the world.

This film would promote a friendly feeling toward the peoples of the Far East and a genuine respect for their talents.

Time: Fifteen minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: Encyclopedia Britannica

Age Group: High School, Grades IX, X, XI, XII

DANIEL BOONE

Subject: Founding of Boonesboro

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: This film is an exciting account of the adventures of that great pioneer and Indian fighter, Daniel Boone. Boone leads a company of settlers into the backwoods along the southern side of the Ohio River. The wars between the settlers and the Indians, the privations of these frontiers people, the starvation and hardship endured by them make a stirring, colorful narrative that would hold young audiences enthralled.

The research work done in making this film, especially the reconstructing of a whole frontier village, was truly remarkable.

Films like this one will give to our pupils an appreciation of the courage and bravery that went into the making of America. Thus inspired, they will want to take their part in the gallant fellowship of men like Boone.

Time: Fifteen minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: Teaching Film Custodians

Age Group: Elementary and High School

DEMOCRACY

Subject: The concrete expressions of democratic ideology

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: This film presents the working out of democratic ideals in practical government. In a most convincing and appealing way it shows the young student the unmistakable signs of democracy: shared power, shared respect, economic balance, popular education. These things gain in power by being presented graphically. The charts, diagrams, and graphs are unusually interesting and most enlightening. This film would be of greatest interest to students who have had a course in civics and government, as well as American history.

Time: Ten minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: Encyclopedia Britannica

Age Group: High School, Grades X,XI, and XII

DON'T BE A SUCKER

Subject: Democracy must be safe-guarded by eternal vigilance against totalitarian propaganda

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: We see the ease with which propaganda can be put over to a crowd of Americans who are too disinterested to challenge the sophistry fed them. Paul Lukas, as narrator, shows how class hatred was built up in Germany by creating distrust and hatred of groups such as the Jews, Catholics, Freemasons, etc. All this group hatred was fostered under the guise of national solidarity. By a clever use of flash backs, the narrator from a park bench shows the subtle way in which Fascism was put over in Germany.

The lesson of the film is that such a state of affairs can happen here in America unless we are eternally vigilant.

A part of the film that I especially enjoyed was the portrayal of a German professor exposing the humbug of the Nazi superman doctrine. The ideal Nordic was supposed to be tall and slim. We see elephantine Goering and undersized, club-footed Goebels. The superman was described as blong, flaxen-haired, blue-eyed. We see dark-haired Hitler and dark-eyed Hess. In the midst of his lecture the professor is dragged off to prison by Nazi Storm-Troopers.

Time: Twenty minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: National Conference of Christians and Jews
Age Group: From Grade VII to Grade XII

GIVE ME LIBERTY

Subject: Patrick Henry's contribution to American Independence

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: The film presents the fiery Revolutionary patriot, Patrick Henry. The scene is laid in Virginia, 1765. We hear Patrick Henry address the Virginian House of Burgesses in two stirring speeches: "If this be treason, make the most of it" and "Give me liberty or give me death". The whole seething, stirring life of the times is given as a background. The pupil will see the beginnings of our nation and the personalities that helped form our democracy take on new and thrilling life. This film would be splendid for High School history students.

Time: Fifteen minutes

Film: Technicolor

Producer: Teaching Film Custodians

Age Group: Grades VIII to XII

IT HAPPENED IN SPRINGFIELD

Subject: Antagonism against foreign-born

Rating: Good

Discussion: The story opens in the cigar store of a foreign-born American. When the foreigner refuses to vote for the ward boss's candidates for office, persecution follows. Hatred against the foreign element in the town is deliberately whipped up to fury pitch by dishonest politicians. The lies circulated produce violence and vandalism.

A veteran of the European war theater returns to this un-American scene. He is saved from disillusionment by a school-teacher who takes him to Springfield, and thus convinces him that an effort to promote understanding and goodwill is being made in America today.

Time: Twenty minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: Warner Brothers

Age Group: High School seniors

JOHN DOE: CITIZEN

Subject: The responsibility of the voter

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: This film shows us conniving, dishonest, greedy politicians exploiting a city for their own sinister purposes. Unwittingly the honest citizens play into their wicked hands because many of them do not bother to vote and do not take time to study the proposed legislation. How a child's death leads to the exposing of a gang of crooked politicians is the subject of the film.

The moral is clearly brought home when the voters organize against the crooks and defeat them at the polls. The duties and responsibilities of American citizenship are very clearly defined.

Time: Fifteen minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer; Teaching Film Custodians

Age Group: High School, Graded IX to XII

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Subject: "Crime does not pay"

Rating: Poor for high school students; better for college students in Social Service courses

Discussion: We are given the life story of Joe Kruz, a ten-year-old boy, born and raised in the slums. Joe's environment is pictured as one of slovenliness, dissipation, and squalor. Very early in boyhood he joins a gang employed in petty thievery. Arrested for the first time, he is paroled; but a second offense sends him to reform school. Again at liberty, but older and wiser in all the sinister ways of the criminal world, Joe joins the big racketeers. A short success is followed by falling again into the hands of the law, this time for murder.

Although the lesson that "crime does not pay" is brought most forcibly home to the pupil, still I feel that other features of the film were less commendable.

In the first of the picture, we see a child in the midst of a slum environment over which he has no control. His moral ruin hangs over him like an inexorable fate. He seems born to be doomed. Then, too, reform school is presented as a place where juvenile delinquents are converted into hardened criminals. Never having learned the right, the moral, the just in life, the young sinner seemed to be deprived of the power of choice in this film.

Time:	Eighteen minutes	Film:	Black and white
Producer:	By March of Time	Age Group:	Social Service Group

LAFAYETTE

Subject: Aid rendered by Lafayette in the American Revolution

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: This film is fast-moving and intensely interesting. It opens in France with the young Marquis de Lafayette telling his friends of the glorious struggle for freedom going on across the seas in America. He decides to lend his aid to the soldiers of liberty. Arriving in Philadelphia, he offers his services and his personal fortune to Washington, who makes him a Brigadier-General in the Continental Army. One of the most moving scenes in the film is the picture of the young Frenchman with Washington at Valley Forge. After the Revolution we see Lafayette again in his native France fighting for liberty there. The film closes with Lafayette at Bunker Hill, requesting that he be buried in his beloved France in soil brought from Bunker Hill.

Time: Fifteen minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: Teaching film Custodians

Age Group: Grades VII to XII

OF THESE OUR PEOPLE

Subject: Anti-Semitic feeling

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: We are shown the contributions of the Jewish people to American life, and most particularly, to American art. Beginning with Robert Morris of Colonial fame, we come up through the decades. We see Jews working in factories, working in crafts, and tilling American soil as farmers. We see them as scientists, professional men, musicians, writers, artists, and educators. Outstanding names in American Jewry are highlighted: Steinmetz, Einstein, Gershwin, Berlin, Frankfurter, Gompers, Baruch and many others

Time: Fifteen minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: Horizon Films

Age Group: Grade VII to XII

OUR BILL OF RIGHTS

Subject: Privileges guaranteed by the Bill of Rights

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: This film opens with an impressive picture of George Washington taking his oath of office. We are then carried through the wonderful privileges guaranteed to us by the first ten amendments to the Constitution. Just now, when we are almost the only country whose citizens are guaranteed rights, this film gives the young American a sense of what our democracy ensures to its citizens.

Time: Twenty minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: Academic Film Company

Age Group: High School, Grades X, XI, XII

OUR SHRINKING WORLD

Subject: Communication through the ages

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: Here we have shown a longitudinal review of transportation and communication from the ancient days to the present. Primitive man used the animals as beasts of burden. Wheels marked a step forward, and then followed trains, automobiles, and airplanes. We see how inventions and discoveries have made the world smaller by lessening the distances between people.

In our smaller world, we must be neighborly, living together with mutual respect. This film presents a compelling argument for better understanding between nations.

Time: Ten minutes

Film: Bleak and white

Producer: Young America Films

Age Group: High School, Grades IX, X, XI, XII

SONG OF A NATION

Subject: Writing of the "The Star-Spangled Banner"

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: The circumstances surrounding the writing of our national anthem by Francis Scott Key are shown here; The bombardment of Fort McHenry is very realistically depicted.

The words of the song will, forever after, mean more to the young student who has seen them born out of the storm and stress of this night.

The choral work was beautifully done.

Time: Twelve minutes

Film: Technicolor

Producer: Teaching Film Custodians

Age Group: Elementary through High School

THE GREATER VICTORY

Subject: Tolerance and brotherhood

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: This film is crowded with action, excitement, suspense, and tense moments. It would be most thrilling for young students to watch and is, indeed, nearer the typical movie thriller than any other indoctrination film that I have yet reviewed.

Some Nazi prisoners of war escape, find the home of the sister-in-law of one of them, and force her to give them shelter. While taking advantage of her home and her larder, they attempt to convert her to Nazi theories. She refutes their arguments, presenting democracy's arguments. Outwitting them, she sends for help. They escape to a nearby church, destroying and defacing its Christian symbols. When trapped, they set fire to the church and die by their own hand.

The minister and rabbi aid the Catholic priest to rebuild, thus presenting a beautiful picture of different sects working harmoniously together.

Time: Ten minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: National Conference of Christians and Jews

Age Group: Junior and Senior High Schools

THE HOUSE I LIVE IN

Subject: Religious tolerance

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: This film would have a tremendous appeal for teen-agers as it features Frank Sinatra in the leading role, and includes a vocal number by him, also. Sinatra comes upon a gang of boys attacking a Jewish boy. Rescuing the persecuted Jew, Sinatra explains to the gang that they are using the cruel treatment advocated by the Nazis. He tells the story of Jews, Protestants, and Catholics fighting the great struggle for freedom together, side by side.

Greatly impressed, the members of the gang undergo a change of heart. One of the erstwhile tormentors evan stoops to pick up the schoolb ooks of the Jewish youth against whom their intolerance was directed.

Time: Ten minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: National Conference of Christians and Jews

Age Group: Elementary through High School

THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY

Subject: Love of country

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: The novel by Edward Everett Hale is very beautifully dramatized. The story moves through emotionalized scenes with good swift action and fine character portrayal. Most high school students are familiar with "The Man Without a Country", having read it in the classroom, or as an outside reading assignment.

We hear Lieutenant Philip Nolan crying out in anger that he never wants to see his country again. He is sentenced to spend the rest of his life on a man-of-war where care is to be taken that he never hears the name of his country again. There follow the lonely, heart-sick years in which he longs for sight and news of his homeland. As Nolan dies, those who look on have a sense of the tragedy of his exile -- a sense of how precious our native land should be to us.

Time: Twenty minutes

Film: Technicolor

Producer: Teaching Film Custodians

Age Group: High School, Grades IX,X,XI, XII

THE PERFECT TRIBUTE

Subject: Sumpathy and kindness for one not holding the same point of view

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: The film picturizes very faithfully the novel by Mary Shipman Andrews, with which most high school pupils are familiar. The presentation of President Lincoln is particularly well-done. Lincoln's sympathy toward the dying Confederate is most touching. Impressive, too, is the Southerner's appreciation of the President's Gettysburg Address.

There are several touching scenes in the film, and, certainly, the lesson of sympathy and charity are brought home most effectively.

Time: Fifteen minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: Teaching Film Custodians

Age Group: Grade VIII to XII

THE WORLD WE WANT TO LIVE IN

Subject: The effect of hate and bigotry on minority groups

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: The powerful appeal of this film arises from the force and vigor of the men chosen to voice the appeal for equality and brotherhood. What splendid Americans speak here: Charles Evans Hughes, Alfred E. Smith, Eddie Cantor, Wendell Wilkie! These men, all typical and renowned Americans, plead for racial and religious tolerance. They show how hate and persecution make possible the cruelties of despotism and dictatorship.

The appeal is so personal -- from a mature American to a young American -- that the emotion engendered is deep and powerful.

Time: Ten minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: National Conference of Christians and Jews

Age Group: High School, Grades X, XI, XII

WE THE PEOPLE

Subject: The United Nations

Rating: Excellent

Discussion: The picture shows the working of the United Nations. We see the delegate going to the various committee rooms, see them in the process of discussion, in friendly conversation, in exchange of civilities and amenities. Scenes such as one showing a Chinese diplomat, an American, a Hindu, all conversing amicably and with mutual respect and goodwill do much to foster a feeling of international brotherhood. The film is a forceful plea for peace among all the nations of the world.

Time: Ten Minutes

Film: Black and white

Producer: Young America Films, Inc.

Age Group: High School, Grades IX to XII

C O N C L U S I O N

It is hoped that this survey of the classroom moving picture will make its potentialities as an effective aid in the learning process obvious to the teacher of Social Studies. It has been shown that children deal chiefly with externals and miss the inner spirit by which people toil toward "a more perfect union", miss the idealistic values through which people find solace and inspiration unless these things are brought home to them in a way strong enough to arouse them emotionally. Certainly, it is just this emotional impact that the drama provides.

Through the medium of the moving picture children will see the struggle for better intergroup relations as but another battle in the American people's fight for freedom and equality. This fight is ever being waged, historically and constantly, following always the democratic tradition of our American heritage. The young student will realize more keenly that we Americans draw our contentment, our strength, and our inspiration out of the knowledge that we struggle ever onward toward the pursuit of our happiness as individuals. Our struggle for social and economic freedom goes ever on. American democracy is not a thing achieved but a thing in motion.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS IN THE HIGH SCHOOL, by Frances Norene Ahl. The Christopher Publishing House, Boston, Mass. 1946

AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS AND METHODS IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES. Eighteenth Year Book of the National Council for the Social Studies, a department of the National Education Association, edited by William H. Hartley. National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 1947

AUDIO-VISUAL METHODS IN TEACHING, by E. Dale. Dryden Press, New York, N. Y.

AUDIO-VISUAL TECHNIQUES, FOR ENRICHMENT OF THE CURRICULUM, by Anna Curtis Chandler and Irene F. Cypher. Noble and Noble, Publishers, Inc., New York, N. Y. 1948

AUDIO-VISUAL "TOOLS" THAT TEACH FOR "KEEPS", by Bruce A. Findlay. Office of the Superintendent, Los Angeles Schools, Los Angeles, Calif. 1944

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STUDY MATERIAL. National Association of Manufacturers, 14 West Forty-ninth Street, New York, N. Y. 1942

BUILDING AN AUDIO-VISUAL PROGRAM, by Robert E. Schreiber and Leonard Calvert. Science Research Associates, Chicago, Ill. 1946

COMPARATIVE EFFECTIVENESS OF PICTORIAL TEACHING MATERIALS, by David J. Goodman. Center of Safety Education, New York University, New York, N. Y. 1943

EDUCATIONAL SCREEN. Education Screen, Inc., 43 E. Lake Street, Chicago, Ill.

FILM FORUM REVIEW: INSTITUTE OF ADULT EDUCATION. Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York, N. Y.

FOCUS ON LEARNING: MOTION PICTURES IN THE SCHOOL, by Charles F. Hoban, Jr. American Council on Education, 744 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C. 1942

HOW TO USE THE EDUCATIONAL SOUND FILM, by M. R. Brunstetter, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill. 1937

LOOK, LISTEN AND LEARN, by L. Harry Strauss and J. R. Kidd. Association Press, New York, N. Y. 1948

MODERN AIDS FOR EXPERIENCES IN LEARNING, by W. M. Gregory. National Education Association. Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction. Eighth Year Book. Columbia University, New York, N. Y. 1935

MOTION PICTURES AND YOUTH, by W. W. Charters. The Macmillan Company, New York, N. Y. 1934

MOTION PICTURES FOR POSTWAR EDUCATION, by the Commission on Motion Pictures in Education. American Council on Education, 744 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C. 1944

MOTION PICTURES IN EDUCATION, A SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE, by Edgar Dale and others. H. W. Wilson Company, 950 University Avenue, New York, N. Y. 1937

This compilation includes: "The Administration of Visual Aids," "Teaching with the Motion Picture and other Visual Aids," "Selecting Instructional Materials," "Film Production in Schools," "Experimental Research in Instructional Films," and "Teacher Preparation in Visual Education."

MOTION PICTURES IN EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES, by Cline M. Koon. Report prepared for the International Congress of Education and Instructional Cinematopography at Rome. University of Chicago Press, 1934

MOTION PICTURES IN THE CLASSROOM, by Ben D. Wood and Frank N. Freeman. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2 Park Street, Boston, Mass. 1929

MOVIES THAT TEACH, by Charles F. Hoban, Jr. The Dryden Press, New York, N. Y. 1947

PREPARATION AND USE OF VISUAL AIDS, by Kenneth B. Haas and Harry Q. Packer. Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, N. Y. 1946

SUMMARY OF LITERATURE ON MOTION PICTURES IN EDUCATION. American Council on Education. The H. W. Wilson Company, New York, N. Y. 1937

SUMMARY STATEMENT, JANUARY 20, 1947. Commission on Educational Organizations. National Conference of Christians and Jews, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

TEACHING WITH FILMS, by George H. Fern and Eldon B. Robbins. The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. 1947

TEACHING WITH MOTION PICTURES, by Edgar Dale and Lloyd Ramseyer. A Handbook of Administrative Practice. American Council on Education Studies, Series II, Vol. I, No. 2. American Council on Education, Washington, D. C. 1937

THE POWER OF THE FILM, by Edgar Dale. The News Letter, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. October 1944

THE VALUE OF FILMS IN HISTORY TEACHING, LONDON, by Frances Consitt. G. Bell and Sons, Ltd. 1931

TRA-DIV LETTER. Official Publication of the Training Division, Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D. C.

VISUALIZING THE CURRICULUM, by Charles F. Hoban and others. The Dryden Press, Inc., New York, N. Y. 1937

Date Due

nco 293-5

Service Paper
Geary, M.M.H
1949
Stand